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CORIOLANUS.

A

TRAGEDY.

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ATTIUS TULLUS, General of the *Volſcian* Army.	Mr. *Ryan.*
GALESUS, one of the Deputies of the *Volſcian* States attending the Camp.	Mr. *Delane.*
The other Deputies of the *Volſcian* States.	
VOLUSIUS, one of the Principal *Volſcian* Officers.	Mr. *Sparks.*
TITUS, Freed-man of GALESUS.	Mr. *Ridout.*
MARCUS MINUCIUS, Conſul and Principal of the Deputation from *Rome* to CORIOLANUS.	Mr. *Bridgwater.*
POSTHUMUS COMINIUS, a Conſular Senator, one of the Deputation, and who had been the *Roman* General at the taking of *Corioli*..	Mr. *Anderſon.*
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Volſcian OFFICERS, LICTORS, SOLDIERS, *&c.*

SCENE, The *Volſcian* Camp.

CORIOLANUS.

A

TRAGEDY.

As it is Acted at the

THEATRE-ROYAL

IN

COVENT-GARDEN.

By the late *JAMES THOMSON.*

LONDON,

Printed for A. MILLAR at *Buchanan's* Head in the *Strand.* MDCCXLIX.

CORIOLANUS.

A

TRAGEDY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

The Volſcian *Camp.*

ATTIUS TULLUS, VOLUSIUS.

VOLUSIUS.

WHENCE is it, TULLUS, that our Arms are ſtopt
Here on the Borders of the *Roman* State?
Why ſleeps that Spirit, whoſe Heroic Ardour
Urg'dy ou to break the Truce, and pour'd our Hoſt,
From all th'united Cantons of the *Volſci*,
On their unguarded Frontier? Such Deſigns
Brook rot an Hour's Delay; their whole Succeſs
Depends on inſtant vigorous Execution.

TULLUS.

VOLUSIUS, I approve thy brave Impatience;
And will to thee, in Confidence of Friendſhip,
Diſcloſe my ſecret Soul. Thou know'ſt GALESUS,

Whoſe Freedom CAIUS MARCIUS, once his Gueſt,
Of all the Spoil of ſack'd *Corioli*,
Alone demanded; and who thence to *Rome*,
From Gratitude and Friendſhip, follow'd MARCIUS;
Whence lately to our *Antium* he return'd,
With Overtures of Peace propos'd by *Rome*.

VOLUSIUS.

I know him well; an antiquated Sage
Of that romantic School, *Pythagoras*
Eſtabliſh'd here on our *Heſperian* Shore;
Whoſe gentle Dictates only ſerve to tame
Enfeebled Mortals into Slaves.

TULLUS.

GALESUS,
Doubtleſs, poſſeſſes many civil Virtues;
Is gentle, good; for Rectitude of Heart
And Innocence of Life by all rever'd.

VOLUSIUS.

Pardon me, TULLUS, if my faithful Bluntneſs
Deems you too lib'ral in his Praiſe. In Peace,
Such may perhaps do well, when Prating rules
An idle World; but in tempeſtuous Times
They are ſtark naught, theſe viſionary Stateſmen,
Fit Rulers only for their golden Age.
The rugged Genius of rapacious *Rome*
For other Men, and other Counſels, calls.

TULLUS.

Your Thoughts are mine—I only meant to tell thee
The Part he bears in this ill-tim'd Delay.
Soon as our gather'd Army march'd from *Antium*,
The *Roman* Senate, whoſe attentive Caution
Watch'd all our Motions, took at once th' Alarm
And ſent a Herald, ere we paſt their Borders,
With formal Ceremony, to demand
The Cauſe of our Approach.—Had I been Maſter,
I would have anſwer'd at the Gates of *Rome*.
But this GALESUS, who attends our Camp
Among the *Volſcian* Deputies, ſo pleaded

The

The Laws of Nations, made ſuch loud Complaints
Againſt th' Infraction of the Publick Faith,
So teaz'd us with the Pedantry of States,
That I was forc'd, unwilling, to permit
His Freedman, TITUS, to be ſent to *Rome*
With our Demands. If theſe the Senate grants,
We then are in the Toils of Peace entangled,
In ſpite of all my Efforts to avoid them.

VOLUSIUS.

O 'tis a wild Chimera! Peace with *Rome!*
Dream not of that, unleſs the *Volſcian* Courage
Be quite ſubdu'd, and only ſeeks to gild
A vile Submiſſion with that ſpecious Name.
Learn Wiſdom from your Neighbours. Peace with *Rome*
Has quell'd the *Latines*, tam'd their free-born Spirit,
And by her Friendſhip honour'd them with Chains.

TULLUS.

She ne'er will grant it on the juſt Conditions
I now have brought the *Volſci* to demand:
The Reſtitution of our conquer'd Cities,
And fair Alliance upon equal Terms.
I know the *Roman* Inſolence will ſcorn
To yield to this: and TITUS muſt return
Within three Days, the longeſt Term allow'd him;
Of which the Third is near elaps'd already.
Then even GALESUS will not dare to ſtop us,
With ſuperſtitious Forms, and ſolemn Trifles,
From letting looſe th'unbridled Rage of War
Againſt thoſe hated Tyrants of *Heſperia*.

VOLUSIUS.

Thanks to the Gods! my Sword will then be free.
Then, poor *Corioli!* thy bleeding Wounds,
Thy Treaſures ſack'd, thy captivated Matrons,
Shall amply be reveng'd by thy VOLUSIUS:
Then, TULLUS, from the lofty Brows of MARCIUS
Thou may'ſt regain the wreaths his conquering hand,

By

By partial Fortune aided, tore from thine.

TULLUS.

O my VOLUSIUS! thou, who art a Soldier,
A try'd and brave one too, ſay, in thy Heart
Doſt thou not ſcorn me? thou, who ſaw'ſt me bend
Beneath the half-ſpent Thunder of a Foe,
Warm from the Conqueſt of *Corioli*,
Which, ruſhing furious in with thoſe, whoſe Sally
He had repell'd, he ſeiz'd almoſt alone;
And gave to Fire and Sword. Yet thence he flew,
Scorning the Plunder of our richeſt City,
His Wounds undreſt, without a Moment's Reſpite,
To where our Armies on the fearful Edge
Of Battle ſtood; and, aſking of the Conſul
To be oppos'd to me, with mighty Rage,
Reſiſtleſs, bore us down.

VOLUSIUS.

True Valour, TULLUS,
Lies in the Mind, the never-yielding Purpoſe,
Nor owns the blind Award of giddy Fortune.

TULLUS.

My Soul, my Friend, my Soul is all on Fire!
Thirſt of Revenge conſumes me! the Revenge
Of generous Emulation, not of Hatred.
This happy *Roman*, this proud MARCIUS haunts me.
Each troubled Night when Slaves and Captives ſleep,
Forgetful of their Chains, I, in my Dreams,
Anew am vanquiſh'd; and, beneath his Sword
With Horror ſinking, feel a tenfold Death,
The Death of Honour. But I will redeem—
Yes, MARCIUS, I will yet redeem my Fame.
To face thee once again is the great Purpoſe
For which alone I live.—Till then how ſlow,
How tedious lags the Time! while Shame corrodes me,
With many a bitter Thought; and injur'd Honour
Sick, and deſponding, preys upon itſelf.

VOLUSIUS.

VOLUSIUS.

It faſt approaches now, the Hour of Vengeance,
To this fam'd Land, to ancient *Latium* due.
Unballanc'd *Rome*, at Variance with herſelf,
To Order loſt, in deep and hot Commotion,
Stands on the dangerous Point of civil War;
Her haughty Nobles and ſeditious Commons
Reviling, fearing, hating one another:
While, on our part, all wears a proſperous Face:
Our Troops united, numerous, high in Spirit,
As if their Gen'ral's Soul inform'd them all.
O long-expected Day!

TULLUS.

Go, brave VOLUSIUS,
Go breathe thy Ardour into every Breaſt,
That when the *Volſcian* Envoy ſhall return,
Whom ere the Cloſe of Evening I expect,
One Spirit may unite us in the Cauſe
Of generous Freedom, and our native Rights,
So long oppreſt by *Rome's* encroaching Power.

SCENE II.

TULLUS *alone.*

GALESUS ſaid that MARCIUS ſtands for Conſul.
O favour thou his ſuit, propitious *Jove*!
That I may brave him at his Army's Head,
In all the Majeſty of ſovereign Pow'r!
That the whole Conduct of the War may reſt
On us alone, and prove by its Deciſion,
Which of the two is worthieſt to command—

SCENE III.

TULLUS, OFFICER.

TULLUS.

Ha! why this Haſte? you look alarm'd.

OFFICER.

My Lord,
One of exalted Port, his Viſage hid,
Has plac'd himſelf upon your ſacred Hearth,
Beneath the dread Protection of your *Lares*;
And ſits majeſtic there in ſolemn Silence.

TULLUS.

Did you not aſk him who, and what he was?

OFFICER.

My Lord, I could not ſpeak; I felt appall'd,
As if the Preſence of ſome God had ſtruck me.

TULLUS.

Come, Daſtard! let me find this Man of Terrors.

SCENE IV.

The back Scene opens, and diſcovers CORIOLANUS *as deſcribed above.*

CORIOLANUS, TULLUS.

TULLUS, *after ſome Silence.*

Illuſtrious Stranger—for thy high Demeanour
Beſpeaks thee ſuch—who art thou?

CORIOLANUS.

CORIOLANUS.

[*Riſing and unmuffling his Face.*

View me, TULLUS—

[*After ſome pauſe.*

Doſt thou not know me?

TULLUS.

No. That noble Front
I never ſaw before. What is thy Name?

CORIOLANUS.

Does not the ſecret Voice of hoſtile Inſtinct,
Does not thy ſwelling Heart declare me to thee?

TULLUS.

Gods! can it be?—

CORIOLANUS.

Yes. I am CAIUS MARCIUS;
Known to thy ſmarting Country by the Name
Of CORIOLANUS. That alone is left me,
That empty Name, for all my Toils, my Service,
The Blood which I have ſhed for thankleſs *Rome*.
Behold me baniſh'd thence, a Victim yielded
By her weak Nobles to the maddening Rabble.
I ſeek Revenge. Thou may'ſt employ my Sword,
With keener Edge, with heavier Force againſt her,
Than e'er it fell upon the *Volſcian* Nation.
But if thou, TULLUS, doſt refuſe me this,
The only Wiſh of my collected Heart,
Where every Paſſion in one burning Point
Concenters, give me Death: Death from thy Hand
I ſure have well deſerv'd—Nor ſhall I bluſh
To take or Life or Death from ATTIUS TULLUS.

TULLUS.

O CAIUS MARCIUS! in this one ſhort Moment,
That we have friendly talk'd, my raviſh'd Heart
Has undergone a great, a wonderous Change.
I ever held thee in my beſt Eſteem;
But this Heroic Confidence has won me,
Stampt me at once thy Friend. I were indeed

A Wretch as mean as this thy Truſt is noble,
Could I refuſe thee thy Demand—Yes, MARCIUS!
Thou haſt thy Wiſh! take half of my Command:
If that be not enough, then take the whole.
We have, my Friend, a gallant Force on Foot,
An Army, MARCIUS, fit to follow thee.
Go, lead them on, and take thy full Revenge.
All ſhould unite to puniſh the Ungrateful.
Ingratitude is Treaſon to Mankind.

CORIOLANUS, *embracing him.*

Thus, generous TULLUS, take a Soldier's Thanks,
Who is not practis'd in the Gloſs of Words—
Thou Friend indeed! Friend to my Cauſe, my Quarrel!
Friend to the darling Paſſion of my Soul!
All elſe I ſet at nought!—Immortal Gods!
I am new-made, and wonder at myſelf!
A little while ago, and I was nothing;
A powerleſs Reptile, crawling on the Earth,
Curs'd with a Soul that reſtleſs wiſh'd to wield
The Bolts of *Jove*! I dwelt in *Erebus*,
I wander'd through the hopeleſs Glooms of Hell,
Stung with Revenge, tormented by the Furies!
Now, TULLUS, like a God, you draw me thence,
Throne me amidſt the Skies, with Tempeſt charg'd,
And put the ready Thunder in my Hand!

TULLUS.

What I have promis'd, MARCIUS, I will do.
Within an Hour at fartheſt we expect
The Freedman of GALESUS back from *Rome*,
Who carry'd to the Senate our Demands.
Their Anſwer will, I doubt not, end the Truce,
And inſtant draw our angry Swords againſt them.
Till then retire within my inmoſt Tent,
Unknown to all but me, that when our Chiefs
Meet in full Council to declare for War,
I may produce thee to their wondering Eyes,

As

As if deſcended from avenging Heaven
To humble lofty *Rome*, and teach her Juſtice.

CORIOLANUS.

To thy Direction, TULLUS, I reſign
My future Life: my Fate is in thy Hands;
And, if I judge aright, the Fate of *Rome*.

The End of the Firſt ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

GALESUS, TITUS.

GALESUS.

INDEED! my TITUS, I had Hopes that *Rome*,
Vext as ſhe is with her domeſtic Broils,
Her Frontier weak, her Armies unprepar'd,
Might have comply'd with our Demands, and given us
The ſame Alliance granted to the *Latines*.

TITUS.

The Senate ſcarce would hear the Terms I offer'd;
But order'd me to bear this Anſwer back:
" If firſt the *Volſci* take up Arms, the *Romans*
" Will be the laſt to lay them down."

GALESUS.

Alas!
This Anſwer ſeals the Doom of many a Wretch.
Unchain'd *Bellona* from her Temple ruſhes,
With all the Crimes and Vices in her Train.
Earth fades at her Approach. To rural Peace,
Fair Plenty, and the ſocial Joy of Cities,
Soon will ſucceed Rage, Rapine, Devaſtation,
Each cruel Horror ſanctify'd by Names.
O Mortals! Mortals! when will you, content
With Nature's Bounty, that in fuller Flow,
Still as your Labours open more its Sources,
Abundant guſhes o'er the happy World;

When

When will you baniſh Violence, and Outrage,
To dwell with Beaſts of Prey in Woods and Deſarts?

TITUS.

Never till *Rome* ſhall change her conquering Maxims.

GALESUS.

Her haughty Spirit now will ſoar beyond
Its uſual Pitch, upborne by CAIUS MARCIUS.
Stands he not for the Conſulate?

TITUS.

He did.
But is no more a Citizen of *Rome*.

GALESUS.

What mean'ſt thou, TITUS?

TITUS.

MARCIUS is from *Rome*
Baniſh'd for ever.

GALESUS.

O immortal Powers!
On what Pretence could they to Exile doom
Their wiſeſt Captain, and their braveſt Soldier?
Nor leſs renown'd for Piety, for Juſtice,
An uncorrupted Heart, and pureſt Manners.

TITUS.

The Charge againſt him was entirely groundleſs,
What not his Enemies themſelves believ'd,
Affecting of tyrannic Power in *Rome*.
His real Crime was only ſome hot Words,
Struck from his fiery Temper, in the Senate,
Againſt thoſe factious Miniſters of Diſcord,
The Tribunes of the People. They to Rage,
And frantic Fury, rous'd the mad Plebeians;
By whom ſupported in their bold Attempt,
They durſt preſume to ſummon to the Bar
Of an enrag'd and partial Populace,
The moſt illuſtrious Senator of *Rome*.
To this the Nobles yielded—and, with his,
Gave up their own and Childrens Rights for ever.

GALESUS.

GALESUS.

O ſhameful Weakneſs in a *Roman* Senate,
So much renown'd for Firmneſs! Yet, my TITUS,
Spite of my Love to MARCIUS, I muſt own it,
The vigorous Soil whence his Heroic Virtues
Luxuriant riſe, if not with careful Hand
Severely weeded, teems with Imperfections.
His lofty Spirit brooks no Oppoſition.
His Rage, if once offended, knows no Bounds.
He deems Plebeians, with Patrician Blood
Compar'd, the Creatures of a lower Species,
Mere menial Hands by Nature meant to ſerve him.

TITUS.

It was this high Patrician Pride undid him.
The furious People triumph'd in his Ruin
As if they had expell'd another *Tarquin:*
While, like a captive Train, the vanquiſh'd Nobles
Hung their dejected Heads in ſilent Shame.
MARCIUS alone ſeem'd unconcern'd; tho' deep
The latent Tempeſt boil'd within his Breaſt,
Choak'd up and ſmother'd with exceſſive Rage.

GALESUS.

You were his Gueſt at *Rome*, and therefore, TITUS,
Might on this ſad Occaſion be permitted
To join your Tears with his domeſtic Friends.
Saw you that moving Scene?

TITUS.

I did, GALESUS.
I follow'd MARCIUS home—His Mother, there,
VETURIA, the moſt venerable Matron
Theſe Eyes have e'er beheld, and ſoft VOLUMNIA,
His lovely, virtuous Wife, amidſt his Children,
Spread on the Ground, lay loſt in dumb Deſpair.
He ſwelling ſtood a while, and could not ſpeak,
Th'affronted Hero ſtruggling with the Man;
Then thus at laſt he broke the gloomy Silence:
" 'Tis done. The guilty Sentence is pronounc'd.
" Ungrateful *Rome* has caſt me from her Boſom.

" Support

" Support this Blow with Fortitude and Courage,
" As it becomes two generous *Roman* Matrons.
" I recommend my Children to your Care.
" Farewel. I go, I quit, without Regret,
" A City grown an Enemy to Virtue."

GALESUS.

Oh godlike MARCIUS! oh unconquer'd Strength
And Dignity of Mind! How much ſuperior
Is ſuch a Soul to all the Power of Fortune!

TITUS.

This ſaid, he ſternly try'd to break away:
When, holding in her Hand his eldeſt Son,
VETURIA follow'd; while the poor VOLUMNIA,
All drown'd in Tears, and bearing in one Arm
Their youngeſt, yet an Infant, with the other
Hung clinging at his Knees—he, turning to them,
Half ſoften'd, half ſevere, breath'd from his Soul
Theſe broken Accents—" Ceaſe your vain Com-
" plaints.
" Mother, you have no more a Son; and thou,
" Thou beſt of Women! thou, my dear VOLUMNIA!
" No more a Huſband"—Pierc'd with theſe dire
Words,
VOLUMNIA lifeleſs ſunk: and off he flung,
With wild Precipitation.

GALESUS.

Thy ſad Tale
Blinds my old Eyes with Tears—But whither, tell me,
O whither, TITUS, bent he then his Courſe?

TITUS.

Where the blind Genius of regardleſs Rage
And Deſperation led. On to the Gate,
Capena call'd, attended by the Nobles,
He ſtalk'd in ſullen Majeſty along;
Nor deign'd a Word. A godlike virtuous Anger
Beam'd thro' his Features, and ſublim'd his Air.
With downcaſt Eyes he walk'd; or if aſide
He chanc'd to look, each Look was great Reproach.

Thus

Thus in emphatic Silence, that made Words
Void and inſipid all, he parted from them,
The Day preceding my Return from *Rome*;
Nor has been heard of ſince, loſt in th'Abyſs
Of his own Woes.

GALESUS.

O MARCIUS, noble MARCIUS!
How ſhall my Friendſhip ſuccour thy Diſtreſs?
Where ſhall I find thee, to partake thy Sorrows,
And make myſelf Companion of thy Exile?
But, TITUS, we indulge Diſcourſe too long—
Go, and aſſemble thou the *Volſcian* Chiefs,
Whilſt I repair to TULLUS, to inform,
And bring him to the Council, there to hear
The fatal Anſwer thou haſt brought from *Rome*.

SCENE II.

Changes to TULLUS's *Tent.*

CORIOLANUS, TULLUS.

CORIOLANUS.

Forgive me, TULLUS, if I count the Moments
That ſtop the Purpoſe of thy noble Kindneſs,
And keep me here confin'd in tame Inaction.
Why lingers TITUS?

TULLUS.

Calm thy reſtleſs Heart,
Brave MARCIUS; every Minute I expect him.
Soon from the Cloud that hides thee, ſhalt thou break
With double Brightneſs; ſoon thy firey Rage
Shall wither all the Strength and Pride of *Rome*.

CORIOLANUS.

O righteous *Jove*, Protector of the Injur'd!
If from my earlieſt Youth, with pious Awe,
I ſtill have reverenc'd thy all-powerful Juſtice,
Still by her ſacred Dictates rul'd my Actions,

O let

O let that Juſtice now ſupport my Cauſe,
And arm my ſtrong Right-hand with all her Terrors!
When that is done, be Life or Death my Lot,
As thy almighty Pleaſure ſhall determine.

[*Enter an Officer to* TULLUS.

OFFICER.

My Lord, GALESUS aſks Admittance to you.

TULLUS.

MARCIUS, retire an Inſtant, till I hear
The Buſineſs brings him hither—Bid him enter.

[*Exit Officer and* CORIOLANUS.

[*Enter* GALESUS.

SCENE III.

TULLUS, GALESUS.

GALESUS.

TULLUS, the *Roman* Senate has return'd
No other Anſwer, to our late Demands,
But abſolute Denial and Defiance.

TULLUS.

It is what I expected—We ſhall teach them
An humbler Language ſoon—Haſt thou aſſembled,
As I deſir'd, the *Volſcian* Chiefs in Council?

GALESUS.

TITUS is gone to ſummon their Attendance.

TULLUS.

It is enough—Come forth, my noble Gueſt!
And ſhew GALESUS how the Gods aſſiſt us.

SCENE

SCENE IV.

CORIOLANUS, TULLUS, GALESUS.

GALESUS.

O My aſtoniſh'd Soul! what do I ſee?
What! CAIUS MARCIUS! CAIUS MARCIUS here,
Beneath one Tent with TULLUS?

TULLUS.

Ay, and more,
With TULLUS, now his Friend and fellow Soldier.
Yes, thou ſhalt ſee him thundering at the Head
Of *Volſcian* Armies; he, who oft has carry'd
Deſtruction thro' their Ranks—Your Leave a Moment,
While to our Chiefs, and Fathers, I announce
Their unexpected Gueſt.

SCENE V.

CORIOLANUS, GALESUS.

CORIOLANUS.

Thou good old Man!
Cloſe let me ſtrain thee to my faithful Heart,
Which now is doubly thine, united more
By the Protection which thy Country gives me,
Than by our former Friendſhip.

GALESUS.

Strange Event!
This is thy Work, almighty Providence!
Whoſe Power, beyond the Stretch of human Thought,

PROLOGUE

Spoken by Mr. QUIN.

I Come not here your Candour to implore
For Scenes, whoſe Author is, alas! no more;
He wants no Advocate his Cauſe to plead;
You will yourſelves be Patrons of the Dead.
No Party his Benevolence confin'd,
No Sect—alike it flow'd to all Mankind.
He lov'd his Friends (forgive this guſhing Tear:
Alas! I feel I am no Actor here)
He lov'd his Friends with ſuch a Warmth of Heart,
So clear of Int'reſt, ſo devoid of Art,
Such generous Freedom, ſuch unſhaken Zeal,
No Words can ſpeak it, but our Tears may tell.—
O candid Truth, O Faith without a Stain,
O Manners gently firm, and nobly plain,
O ſympathizing Love of others Bliſs,
Where will you find another Breaſt like His?—
Such was the Man—the Poet well you know:
Oft has he touch'd your Hearts with tender Woe:
Oft in this crouded Houſe with juſt Applauſe
You heard him teach fair Virtue's pureſt Laws;
For his chaſte Muſe employ'd her Heav'n-taught Lyre
None but the nobleſt Paſſions to inſpire,
Not one immoral, one corrupted Thought,
One Line, which dying he could wiſh to blot.
Oh may To-night your favourable Doom
Another Laurel add to grace his Tomb:
Whilſt he, ſuperior now to Praiſe or Blame,
Hears not the feeble Voice of Human Fame.

Yet

PROLOGUE.

Yet if to thoſe, whom moſt on Earth he lov'd,
From whom his pious Care is now remov'd,
With whom his liberal Hand, and bounteous Heart
Shar'd all his little Fortune could impart,
If to thoſe Friends your kind Regard ſhall give
What they no longer can from His receive,
That, that, even now, above yon ſtarry Pole,
May touch with Pleaſure his immortal Soul.

Revolves the Orbs of Empire; bids them ſink
Deep in the deadning Night of thy Diſpleaſure,
Or riſe majeſtic o'er a wondering World.
The Gods by thee—I ſee it, CORIOLANUS,—
Mean to exalt us, and depreſs the *Romans*.

CORIOLANUS.

GALESUS, yes, the Gods have ſent me hither;
Thoſe righteous Gods, who, when vindictive Juſtice
Excites them to deſtroy a worthleſs People,
Make their own Crimes and Follies ſtrike the Blow.

GALESUS.

Cheriſh theſe Thoughts, that teach us what we are,
And tame the Pride of Man. There is a Power,
Unſeen that rules th'illimitable World,
That guides its Motions, from the brighteſt Star,
To the leaſt Duſt of this ſin-tainted Mold;
While Man, who madly deems himſelf the Lord
Of all, is nought but Weakneſs and Dependance.
This ſacred Truth, by ſure Experience taught,
Thou muſt have learnt, when, wandering all alone,
Each Bird, each Inſect, flitting thro' the Sky,
Was more ſufficient for itſelf, than thou—
Ah the full Image of thy Woes diſſolves me!
The Pangs that muſt have torn, at parting from thee,
Thy Mother and thy Wife. I cannot think
Of that ſad Scene without ſome Drops of Pity!

CORIOLANUS.

Who was it forc'd me to that bitter Parting?
Who, in one cruel haſty Moment, chas'd me
From Wife, from Children, Friends, and Houſhold Gods,
Me! who ſo often had protected theirs?
Who, from the ſacred City of my Fathers
Drove me with Nature's Commoners to dwell,
To lodge beneath their wide unſhelter'd Roof,
And at their Table feed? O blaſt me, Gods!
With ev'ry Woe! Debility of Mind,
Diſhonour, juſt Contempt, and palſy'd Weakneſs,

If I forgive the Villains! yes GALESUS,
Yes, I will offer to the Powers of Vengeance
A great, a glorious Victim—a whole City!—
Why, TULLUS, this Delay?

GALESUS.

May CORIOLANUS
Be to the *Volſcian* Nation, and himſelf,
The dread, the godlike Inſtrument of Juſtice!
But let not Rage and Vengeance mix their Rancour;
Let them not trouble with their fretful Storm,
Their angry Gleams, that Azure, where enthron'd
The calm Divinity of Juſtice ſits
And pities, while ſhe puniſhes, Mankind.

CORIOLANUS.

What ſaidſt thou? What, againſt the Powers of Vengeance?
The Gods gave honeſt Anger, juſt Revenge,
To be the awful Guardians of the Rights
And native Dignity of Human kind.
O were it not for them, the ſaucy World
Would grow a noiſome Neſt of little Tyrants!
Each Carrion Crow, on Eagle Merit perch'd,
Would peck his Eyes out, and the mungril Cur
At pleaſure bait the Lyon—No, GALESUS,
I would not raſhly, nor on light Occaſion,
Receive the deep Impreſſion in my Breaſt;
But when the Baſe, the Brutal and Unjuſt,
Or worſe than all, th'Ungrateful, ſtamp it there,
O I will then with Luxury ſupreme,
Enjoy the Pleaſure of offended Gods,
A righteous, juſt Revenge!—Behold my Soul.

[*Enter an Officer.*

OFFICER.

My Lords, th'aſſembled Chiefs deſire your Preſence.

GALESUS.

Come, noble MARCIUS; let my joyful Hand
Conduct thee thither—Doubt not thy Reception
Will be proportion'd to thy Fame and Merit.

SCENE

SCENE VI.

The back Scene opens, and diſcovers the Deputies of the Volſcian *States, aſſembled in Council. They riſe and ſalute* CORIOLANUS; *then reſume their Places.*

GALESUS, TULLUS, CORIOLANUS, SENATORS.

GALESUS.

Aſſembled States, and Captains of the *Volſci*,
Behold the Chief ſo much renown'd in War;
Our once ſo formidable Foe, but now
Our proffer'd Friend and Soldier—CAIUS MARCIUS.

1ſt SENATOR.

We give him hearty Welcome, from our Souls!

CORIOLANUS.

Moſt noble Chiefs, and Fathers of the *Volſci*,
I need not ſay, how by the People's Rage,
And the poor Weakneſs of the timid Nobles,
I am expell'd from *Rome*. Had I confin'd
My Wiſhes merely to a ſafe Retreat,
Some *Latine* City might have given me that;
Or any nameleſs Corner. What imports it,
Where a tame patient Exile rots in Silence?
But, *Volſcian* Lords, permit me to declare,
I would at once cut ſhort my uſeleſs Days,
Rather than be that deſpicable Wretch,
Who neither can take Vengeance on his Foes,
Nor ſerve his Friends. That is my Temper, Chiefs.
I ſhall be glad to merit, by my Sword,
Th'Aſylum which I ſeek among the *Volſci*.
Rome is our common Foe: Then let us join
Our common Suffering, Paſſions, and Reſentments.
Yes, tho' but one, I bring ſo many Wrongs,
So large a Share of powerful Enmity,

Into the War, as gives me the Preſumption,
To offer to the *Volſcian* States th'Alliance
Even of my ſingle Arm.—

TULLUS.

That ſingle Arm
Is in itſelf a numerous Army, MARCIUS;
The *Volſcians* ſo eſteem it—But proceed.

CORIOLANUS.

I will not mention, *Volſcian* Chiefs, what Talent
The World allows me to poſſeſs in War:
But be it what it will, you may employ it.
Soldier, or Captain, in whatever Station
You place me, I will loſe each Drop of Blood,
Or with this Hand I'll fix the *Volſcian* Standard
On the proud Towers of Capitolian *Jove*.

TULLUS.

Chiefs of the *Volſcian* League, I give you Joy
Of our new Citizen, the noble MARCIUS.
The Genius of the *Volſcian* State has ſent him,
Whetted by Wrongs into a keener Hatred
Than that we bear to *Rome*. It were contemning,
With impious ſelf-ſufficient Arrogance,
This Bounty of the Gods, not to accept,
With every Mark of Honour, of his Service.
I, *Volſcians*, I, even ATTIUS TULLUS, give,
Firſt of you all, my Voice, that CAIUS MARCIUS
Be now receiv'd to high Command among us;
That inſtantly we do appoint him General
Of half our Troops, which here, with your Conſent,
I to him yield.—Speak, Chiefs, is this your Pleaſure?

1ſt SENATOR.

It is,—We give unanimous Conſent.

TULLUS, *embracing him.*

MARCIUS, I joy to call thee my Companion,
And Collegue in this War.

CORIOLANUS.

By all the Gods!
Thou art the generous Victor of my Soul!
Yes, TULLUS, I am conquer'd by thy Virtue.

GALESUS.

Tho' I have oft, on great Occaſions, TULLUS,
Beheld thee in the Senate, and the Field,
Cover'd with Glory; yet, I muſt avow,
I never ſaw thee ſhew ſuch genuine Greatneſs,
Such true Sublimity of Soul, as now.
To ſcorn th' all-powerful Charm of ſelfiſh Paſſions,
Chiefly the dazzling Pride of Emulation,
That noble Weakneſs of Heroic Minds,
To ſink thyſelf that thou may'ſt raiſe thy Country;
To put the Sword into thy Rival's Hand,
And twine thy promis'd Laurels round his Brow—
O 'tis a Flight beyond the higheſt Point
Of Martial Glory! and what few can reach.
Go forth, the choſen Miniſters of Juſtice;
And may that awful Power, whoſe ſecret Hand
Sways all our Paſſions, turns our partial Views
All to its own dread Purpoſes, attend you!

CORIOLANUS.

I burn to enter on the glorious Taſk
You now have mark'd me out. How ſlow the Time
To the warm Soul, that in the very Inſtant
It forms, would execute, a great Deſign.
'Tis my Advice we march direct to *Rome*;
We cannot be too quick. Let the firſt Dawn
See us in bright Array before her Walls.
Perhaps when they behold their Exile there,
Back'd by your Force, ſome conſcious Hearts among them
May feel th'Alarm of Guilt.

TULLUS.

I much approve
Of this Advice. 'Tis what I thought before,
Ere ſtrengthen'd, MARCIUS, by thy mighty Arm:

But now 'tis doubly right. Here, *Volſcian* Chiefs,
Here let our Council terminate—The Troops
Have had Repoſe ſufficient. Strait to *Rome*,
Come, let us urge our March—As yet the Stars
Ride in their middle Watch: we ſhall with Eaſe,
Reach it by Dawn.—

CORIOLANUS.

Yes, we have time—too much!
Six tedious Hours till Morn—But hence! away!
My Soul on Fire anticipates the Dawn.

End of the Second ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

CORIOLANUS, TULLUS, VOLUSIUS, TITUS, *with a Croud of* Volſcian *Officers. Acclamations behind the Scenes.*

CORIOLANUS.

NO more—I merit not this laviſh Praiſe.
True, we have driven the *Roman* Legions back,
Defeated, and diſgrac'd—But what is this?
Nothing, ye *Volſci*, nothing yet is done.
We but begin the wonderous Leaf of Story,
That marks the *Roman* Doom. At length it dawns,
The deſtin'd Hour, that eaſes of their Fears
The Nations round, and ſets *Heſperia* free.
Come on, my brave Companions of the War!
Come, let us finiſh at one mighty Stroke,
This Toil of labouring Fate—We will, or periſh!
While, noble TULLUS, you protect the Camp,
I, with my Troops, all Men of choſen Valour,
And well-approv'd to-day, will ſtorm the City.

TITUS.

Beneath thy animating Conduct, MARCIUS,
What can the *Volſcian* Valour not perform.
Thy very Sight and Voice ſubdues the *Romans*.
When, lifting up your Helm, you ſhew'd your Face,
That like a Comet glar'd Deſtruction on them,
I ſaw their braveſt Veterans fly before thee.
Their ancient Spirit has with thee forſook them,
And Ruin hangs o'er yon devoted Walls.

[*Enter an Officer, who addreſſes himſelf to* Coriolanus.

OFFICER.

My Lord, a Herald is arriv'd from *Rome*,
To ſay, a Deputation from the Senate,
Attended by the Miniſters of Heaven,
A venerable Train of Prieſts and Flamens,
Is on the Way, addreſs'd to you.

CORIOLANUS.

To me!
What can this Meſſage mean!—Stand to your Arms,
Ye *Volſcian* Troops; and let theſe *Romans* paſs
Betwixt the lowring Frown of double Files.
What! do they think me ſuch a milky Boy,
To pay my Vengeance with a few ſoft Words.
Come, fellow Soldiers, TULLUS, come, and ſee,
If I betray the Honours you have done me.

[*Goes out with a Train of* Volſcian *Officers.*

SCENE II.

TULLUS, VOLUSIUS, *who remain.*

VOLUSIUS, *after ſome Silence.*

Are we not, TULLUS, failing in our Duty
Not to attend our General?

TULLUS.

How! What ſaidſt thou?

VOLUSIUS.

Methought, my Lord, his parting Orders were,
We ſhould attend the Triumph now preparing
O'er all his Foes at once—*Romans* and *Volſci!*
Come, we ſhall give Offence.

TULLUS.

Of this no more.
I pray thee ſpare thy bitter Irony.

VOLUSIUS.

VOLUSIUS.

Shall I then ſpeak without Diſguiſe?

TULLUS.

Speak out:
With all the honeſt Bluntneſs of a Friend.
Think'ſt thou I fear the Truth?

VOLUSIUS.

Then, TULLUS, know,
Thou art no more the General of the *Volſci*.
Thou haſt, by this thy generous Weakneſs, ſunk
Thyſelf into a private Man of *Antium*.
Yes, thou haſt taken from thy laurel'd Brow
The well-earn'd Trophies of thy Toils and Perils,
Thy ſpringing Hopes, the faireſt ever budded,
And heap'd them on a Man too proud before.

TULLUS.

He bears it high.

VOLUSIUS.

Death, and Perdition! high!
With uncontroul'd Command!—You ſee, already,
He will not be encumber'd with the Fetters
Of our Advice. He ſpeaks his Sovereign Will;
On every Hand he iſſues out his Orders,
As to his natural Slaves.—For you, my Lord,
He has, I think, confin'd you to your Camp,
There in inglorious Indolence to languiſh;
While he, beneath your blaſted Eye, ſhall reap
The Harveſt of your Honour.

TULLUS.

No, VOLUSIUS,
Whatever Honour ſhall by him be gain'd
Reverts to me, from whoſe ſuperior Bounty
He drew the Means of all his glorious Deeds.
This mighty Chief, this Conqueror of *Rome*
Is but my Creature.—

VOLUSIUS.

Wretched Self-Deluſion;
He and the *Volſcians* know he is thy Maſter.

He

He acts as ſuch in all Things—Now by *Mars*,
Could my abhorrent Soul endure the Thought
Of ſtooping to a *Roman* Chief, I here
Would leave thee in thy ſolitary Camp,
And go where Glory calls.

TULLUS.

Indeed, VOLUSIUS,
I did expect more equal Treatment from him.
But what of that?—The generous Pride of Virtue
Diſdains to weigh too nicely the Returns
Her Bounty meets with—Like the liberal Gods,
From her own gracious Nature ſhe beſtows,
Nor ſtoops to aſk Reward—Yet muſt I own,
I thought he would not have ſo ſoon forgot
What he ſo lately was, and what I am.

VOLUSIUS.

Gods! knew ye not his Character before?
Did you not know his Genius was to yours
Averſe, as are Antipathies in Nature?
High, over-weening, tyranouſly Proud,
And only fit to hold Command o'er Slaves?
Hence, as repugnant to that equal Life,
Which is the quickening Soul of all Republicks,
The *Roman* People caſt him forth; and we,
Shall we receive the Bane of their Repoſe,
Into our Breaſt? Are we leſs free than they?
Or ſhall we be more patient of a Tyrant?

TULLUS.

All this I knew. But while his Imperfections
Are thy glad Theme, thou haſt forgot his Virtues.

VOLUSIUS.

I leave that Subject to the ſmooth GALESUS,
And theſe his *Volſcian* Flatterers—His Virtues!
Truſt me there is no Inſolence that treads
So high as that which rears itſelf on Virtue.

TULLUS.

Well, be it ſo—I meant, that even his Vices
Should, on this great Occaſion, ſerve the *Volſci*.

VOLU-

VOLUSIUS.

Confuſion! there it is! there lurks the Sting
Of our Diſhonour! while this MARCIUS leads
The *Roman* Armies, ours are driven before him.
Behold, he changes Sides; when with him changes
The Fortune of the War. Strait they grow *Volſci*
And we victorious *Romans*—Such, no doubt,
Such is his ſecret Boaſt—Ay, this vile Brand,
Succeſs itſelf will fix for ever on us;
And, TULLUS, thou, 'tis thou muſt anſwer for it.

TULLUS, *aſide.*

His Words are Daggers to my Heart; I feel
Their Truth, but am aſham'd to own my Folly.

VOLUSIUS.

O Shame! O Infamy! the Thought conſumes me,
It ſcalds my Eyes with Tears, to ſee a *Roman*
Borne on our Shoulders to immortal Fame:
Juſt in the happy Moment that decided
The long Diſpute of Ages, that for which
Our generous Anceſtors had toil'd and bled,
To ſee him then ſtep in and ſteal our Glory!
O that we firſt had periſh'd all! A People,
Who cannot find in their own proper Force
Their own Protection, are not worth the ſaving!

TULLUS

It muſt have Way! I will no more ſuppreſs it—
Know, then, my rough old Friend, no leſs than thee
His Conduct hurts me, and upbraids my Folly.
I wake as from a Dream. What Demon mov'd me?
What doating Generoſity? his Woes,
Was it his Woes! to ſee the brave reduc'd
To truſt his mortal Foe? perhaps, a little
That work'd within my Boſom—But, VOLUSIUS,
That was not all—I will to thee confeſs
The Weakneſs of my Heart—Yes, it was Pride,
The dazzling Pride to ſee my Rival-Warriour
The great CORIOLANUS, bend his Soul,
His haughty Soul, to ſue for my Protection.

Protection

Protection ſaid I? were it that alone,
I had been baſe to have refus'd him that,
To have refus'd him aught a gallant Foe
Owes to a gallant Foe.—But to exalt him
To the ſame Level, nay above myſelf;
To yield him the Command of half my Troops,
The choiceſt acting Half—That, that was Madneſs!
Was weak, was mean, unworthy of a Man!—

VOLUSIUS.

I ſcorn to flatter thee—It was indeed.

TULLUS.

Curſe on the Slave, GALESUS! ſoothing, he
Seiz'd the fond Moment of Infatuation,
And clinch'd the Chains my generous Folly forg'd,
How ſhall I from this Labyrinth eſcape?
Muſt it then be! what cruel Genius dooms me,
In War or Peace to creep beneath his Fortune?

VOLUSIUS.

That Genius is thyſelf. If thou canſt bear
The very Thought of ſtooping to this *Roman*,
Thou from that Moment art his Vaſſal, TULLUS;
By that thou doſt acknowledge, Parent Nature
Has form'd him thy Superior. But if fix'd
Upon the Baſe of manly Reſolution,
Thou ſay'ſt—I will be free! I will command!
I and my Country! then—O never doubt it—
We ſhall find Means to cruſh this vain Intruder;
Even I myſelf—this Hand—
Nay, hear me, TULLUS,
'Tis not yet come to that, that laſt Reſource.
I do not ſay we ſhould employ the Dagger,
While other, better Means are in our Power.

TULLUS.

No, my VOLUSIUS, Fortune will not drive us,
Or I am much deceiv'd, to that Extreme:
We ſhall not want the ſtrongeſt faireſt Plea,
To give a ſolemn Sanction to his Fate.
He will betray himſelf. Whate'er his Rage

Of

Of Paſſion talks, a Weakneſs for his Country
Sticks in his Soul, and he is ſtill a *Roman*.
Soon ſhall we ſee him tempted to the Brink
Of this ſure Precipice—Then down, at once,
Without Remorſe, we hurl him to Perdition!—
But hark! the Trumpet calls us to a Scene
I ſhould deteſt, if not from Hope we thence
May gather Matter to mature our Purpoſe.

SCENE III.

The back Scene opens, and diſcovers CORIOLANUS *ſitting on his Tribunal, attended by his Lictors, and a Croud of* Volſcian *Officers. Files of Troops drawn up on either Hand. In the Depth of the Scene appear the Deputies from the* Roman *Senate*, M. MINUCIUS, POSTHUMUS COMINIUS, SP. LARTIUS, P. PINNARIUS, *and* Q. SULPITIUS, *all Conſular Senators, who had been his moſt zealous Friends. And behind them march the Prieſts, the Sacrificers, the Augurs, and the Guardians of the ſacred Things, dreſt in their Ceremonial Habits. Theſe advance ſlowly, betwixt the Files of Soldiers, under Arms. As* TULLUS *enters,* CORIOLANUS *riſing ſalutes him.*

CORIOLANUS.

Here, noble TULLUS, ſit, and judge my Conduct;
Nor ſpare to check me if I act amiſs.

TULLUS.

MARCIUS, the *Volſcian* Fate is in thy Hands.

[CORIOLANUS *is ſeated again, and* TULLUS *places himſelf upon a Tribunal on his Left Hand. Mean time the* Roman *Deputies advance up to* CORIOLANUS *and ſalute him, which he returns.*

CORIOLANUS.

What, *Romans*, from the Generals of the *Volſci*
Is your Demand?

MINU-

MINUCIUS.

O CORIOLANUS, *Rome*,
Nurſe of thy tender Years, thy Parent-City,
Her Senators, her People, Prieſts, and Augurs,
Her every Order and Degree, by us,
Thy ever-zealous, ſtill-unſhaken Friends,
Sue in the moſt pathetic Terms for Peace.
And if in This, conſtrain'd, We from our Maxim,
Never to aſk but give it, muſt depart;
It is ſome Conſolation, in the State
To which thou haſt by thy ſuperior Valour
Reduc'd us, that we aſk it from a *Roman*.

CORIOLANUS.

I was a *Roman* once, and thought the Name
Was not diſhonour'd by me; but it pleas'd
Your Lords, the Mob of *Rome*, to take it from me;
Nor will I now receive it back again.

MILUCIUS.

The Name thou mayſt reject, but canſt not throw
The Duties from thee which that Name imports;
Indiſſoluble Duties, bound upon thee
By the ſtrong Hand of Nature, and confirm'd
By the dread Sanction of all-ruling *Jove*.
Then hear thy Country's ſupplicating Voice;
By all thoſe Duties I conjure thee hear us.

CORIOLANUS.

Well—I will hear thee; ſpeak, declare thy Meſſage.

MILUCIUS.

Give Peace, give healing Peace, to two brave Nations,
Fatigu'd with War, and ſick of cruel Deeds!
To carry on Deſtruction's eaſy Trade,
Afflict Mankind, and ſcourge the World with War,
Is what each wicked, each ambitious Man,
Who lets his furious Paſſions looſe, may do:
But in the flattering Torrent of Succeſs,
To check his Rage, and drop th'avenging Sword,
When a repenting People aſk it of him,
That is the genuine Bounty of a God.

Then

Then urge no further this your juſt Reſentment;
Which, injur'd as you are, you needs muſt feel,
But never ought to carry into Action,
Againſt your ſacred Country; whence you drew
Your Life, your Virtues, every mortal Good,
That very Valour you employ againſt her.
Stop, CORIOLALUS, ere, beyond Retreat,
You plunge yourſelf in Crimes. To the fierce Joy
Of Vengeance puſh'd to barbarous Exceſs,
Repentance will ſucceed, and ſickning Horror.
Conſider too the ſlippery State of Fortune.
The Gods take Pleaſure oft, when haughty Mortals
On their own Pride erect a mighty Fabrick,
By ſlighteſt means, to lay their towering Schemes
Low in the Duſt, and teach them they are nothing.
Return, thou virtuous *Roman!* to the Boſom
Of thy imploring Country. Lo! her Arms
She fondly ſpreads to take thee back again,
And by redoubled Love efface her Harſhneſs.
Return, and crown thee with the nobleſt Wreathe,
Which Glory can beſtow — the Palm of Mercy!

CORIOLANUS.

MARCUS MINUCIUS, and ye other *Romans*,
Reſpected Senators, and holy Flamens,
Attend, and take to your Demand this Anſwer:
Why court you me, the Servant of the *Volſci?*
It is to them that you muſt bend for Peace,
Which on theſe only Terms they will accord you.
" Reſtore the conquer'd Lands, your former Wars
" Have raviſh'd from them: from their Towns and
Cities,
" Won by your Arms, withdraw your Colonies;
" And to the full Immunities of *Rome*
" Frankly admit them, as you have the *Latines.*"
Then, *Romans*, you have Peace, and not till then!
If theſe are Terms which ſuit not your Ambition,
They ſuit the State to which the *Volſcian* Arms

Have

Have now reduc'd you—We have learn'd from *Rome*
To uſe our Fortune, and command the Vanquiſh'd.

TULLUS, *(aſide.)*

Death to my Hopes! I'm now his Slave for ever.

CORIOLANUS; *addreſſing himſelf to the* Volſci.

This, my illuſtrious Patrons and Protectors,
Volſci, to you I ow'd. Permit me now
To do myſelf and injur'd Honour Juſtice.
[*Turning again to the* Romans.
As to the Liberty you idly vaunt
To give me of returning to your City,
'Tis what I hold unworthy of Acceptance.
Can I return into th'ungrateful Boſom
Of a diſtracted State, where, to the Rage
Of a vile ſenſeleſs Populace, the Laws
Are by your ſhameful Weakneſs given a Prey?
Who are the Men that hold the Sway among you?
And whom have you expell'd, as even unworthy
To live within the Cincture of your Walls!—
O the wild Thought breaks in and troubles Reaſon!—
With what, ye *Romans*, can the ſowereſt Cenſor,
The moſt envenom'd Malice, juſtly charge me?
Did I e'er break your Laws? Nay, did I e'er
Do aught that could diſturb the ſacred Order,
The Peace and ſocial Harmony of Life;
Or taint your ancient Sanctity of Manners?
What was my Crime? I could not bear to ſee
Your Dignity debas'd: to ſee the Rabble,
Tread on the reverend grey Authority
Of Senatorial Wiſdom: Yes, for you,
In your Defence I did enrage this Monſter;
And yet you baſely left me to its Fury.
Then talk no more of Services and Friendſhip:
A Friend, who can, and does not ſhield, betrays me.
Or if the Power was wanting, then your Senate
Is ſunk into Servility, and Bondage,
Nor ſhould a Freeman deign to ſit among you.

MINUCIUS.

MINUCIUS.

The Wiſeſt are ſometimes compell'd to yield
To popular Storms: Yet I defend not, MARCIUS,
Our timid Conduct; we have felt our Error,
And now invite thee back to aid the Senate,
With thy heroic Spirit to reſtrain
The giddy Rage of Faction, and to hold
The Reins of Government more firm hereafter.
As to th' Appeal which thou haſt nobly made
In Vindication of thy ſpotleſs Fame,
With Pleaſure we confirm it, and bear Witneſs
To all thy public and thy private Virtues:
But let us alſo beg thee not to ſtain
The Brightneſs of that Glory by a Crime,
Which, unrepented, would diſgrace them all,
A dire rebellious War againſt thy Country.

CORIOLANUS.

Abſurd! What can you mean? To call a People,
Who with the laſt Indignity have us'd me,
To call my Foes my Country! No, MINUCIUS,
It is the generous Nation of the *Volſci*,
Theſe brave, theſe virtuous Men, you ſee around me,
Who, when I wander'd a poor helpleſs Exile,
Took Pity of my Injuries and Woes;
Forgot the former Miſchiefs of my Sword;
Heap'd on me Kindneſs, Honours, Dignities;
Fear'd not to truſt me with this high Command,
And plac'd me here the Guardian of their Cauſe:—
Be Witneſs, *Jove!*—It is alone their Nation
I henceforth will acknowlege for my Country!
Let this ſuffice—You have my Anſwer, ROMANS.

COMINIUS.

This Anſwer, CORIOLANUS, is the Dictate
More of thy Pride than Magnanimity:
'Tis thy Revenge that gives it, not thy Virtue.
Art thou above the Gods? who joy to ſhow'r
Their doubled Goodneſs on repenting Mortals?
But think not I intend, by This, to urge

Our proffer'd Peace, ſo harſhly treated, further.
That were a Weakneſs ill becoming *Romans*.
Yet I muſt tell thee, it would better ſuit
A fierce deſpotic Chief of barbarous Slaves,
Than the calm Dignity of one who ſits
In the grave Senate of a free Republic,
To talk ſo high, and as it were to thruſt
Plebeians from the native Rights of Man.—

CORIOLANUS.

Ha! doſt thou come the People's Advocate
To Me, COMINIUS! Com'ſt thou to inſult me!

COMINIUS.

Nay, hear me, MARCIUS:—— Theſe grey Hairs impower me
To ſet thee right before this great Aſſembly:
And there was once a Time, thou wouldſt have heard
Thy General with more Deference and Patience.—
I tell thee then, whoe'er amidſt the Sons
Of Reaſon, Valour, Liberty, and Virtue,
Diſplays diſtinguiſh'd Merit, is a Noble
Of Nature's own creating. Such have riſen
Sprung from the Duſt, or where had been our Honours?
And ſuch in radiant Bands will riſe again,
In yon immortal City, that, when moſt
Depreſt by Fate, and near apparent Ruin,
Returns, as with an Energy divine,
On her aſtoniſh'd Foes, and ſhakes them from her—
Your Pardon, VOLSCI—But This, CORIOLANUS,
Is what I had to ſay.

CORIOLANUS.

And I have heard it—

[*Riſing from his Tribunal; and the Prieſts advancing to addreſs him, he prevents them.*

For you, ye awful Miniſters of Heaven,
Let me not hear your holy Lips profan'd
By urging what my Duty muſt refuſe.
I bow in Adoration to the Gods;

I vene-

I venerate their Servants. But there is,
There is a Power, their chief, their darling Care,
The Guardian of Mankind, which to betray
Were violating all—And that is JUSTICE.
So far my public Character demands;
So far my Honour.—Now, what ſhould forbid
The Man, and Friend, to be indulg'd a little?
Permit me to embrace thee, good MINUCIUS;
Thee, LARTIUS; you, PINNARIUS and SULPICIUS:
But chiefly thee, COMINIUS, who firſt rais'd me
To Deeds of Arms; who from thy Conſular Brow
Took thy own Crown, and with it circled mine.
Tho nought can ſhake my Purpoſe, yet I wiſh
That *Rome* had ſent me others on this Errand.
I thank you for your Friendſhip. The Protection,
Which you have given to thoſe, whom once I call'd
By tender Names, I would not now remember.
How ſhall I—ſay—return your generous Goodneſs?
O there is nothing you, as Friends, can aſk,
My grateful Heart will not with Pleaſure grant you.

COMINIUS.

We thank thee, CORIOLANUS—But a *Roman*
Diſdains that Favour you refuſe his Country.

CORIOLANUS.

[*To the* Volſcian *Officers.*
See that they be, with due Regard and Safety,
Conducted back.
[*To the* Roman *Senators.*
I will ſuſpend th' Aſſault,
Till to theſe Terms, of which we will not bate
The ſmalleſt Part, your Senate may have Time
To ſend their lateſt Anſwer. Then we cut
All further Treaty off. *Romans*, farewel.

The End of the Third ACT.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

TULLUS *alone.*

WHAT is the Mind of Man? A reſtleſs Scene
Of Vanity and Weakneſs; ſhifting ſtill,
As ſhift the Lights of our uncertain Knowlege;
Or as the various Gale of Paſſion breathes.
None ever thought himſelf more deeply founded
On what is right, nor felt a nobler Ardor,
Than I, when I inveſted CAIUS MARCIUS
With this ill-judg'd Command. Now it appears
Diſtraction, Folly, monſtrous Folly! Meanneſs!
And down I plunge, betray'd even by my Virtue,
From Gulph to Gulph, from Shame to deeper Shame.

SCENE II.

TULLUS. GALESUS.

GALESUS.

I liſten'd, TULLUS, to th' important Scene
That lately paſs'd before us, with moſt ſtrict
Unprejudic'd Attention; and have ſince
Revolv'd it in my Mind, both as a Man,
Ally'd to all Mankind, and as a *Volſcian.*
Indeed our Terms are high, and by the Manner

In

In which they were preſcrib'd by CORIOLANUS,
Are what we cannot hope will e'er be granted.
They ſhould be ſoften'd. Let us yield a little,
Conſcious ourſelves to a great Nation's Pride,
The Pride of human Nature. Could the *Romans*
Stoop to ſuch Peace, commanded by the Sword,
They then were Slaves, unworthy our Alliance.

TULLUS.

Gods! do I hear in thee, one of the Chiefs
Intruſted with the Honour of the *Volſci*,
An Advocate for *Rome?*

GALESUS.

I glory, TULLUS,
To own myſelf an Advocate for Peace.
Peace is the happy natural State of Man;
War his Corruption, his Diſgrace—

TULLUS.

His Safeguard!
His Pride! his Glory!—What but War, juſt War,
Gave *Greece* her Heroes? Thoſe who drew the Sword
(As we do now) againſt the Sons of Rapine;
To quell proud Tyrants, and to free Mankind.

GALESUS.

Yes, TULLUS, when to juſt Defence the Warrior
Confines his Force, he is a worſhip'd Name,
Dear to Mankind, the Firſt and Beſt of Mortals!
Yet ſtill, if this can by ſoft Means be done,
And fair Accommodation, that is better.
Why ſhould we purchaſe with the Blood of Thouſands,
What may be gain'd by mutual juſt Conceſſion?
Why give up Peace, the beſt of human Bleſſings,
For the vain cruel Pride of uſeleſs Conqueſt?

TULLUS.

Theſe ſoothing Dreams of philoſophic Quiet
Are only fit for unfrequented Shades.
The Sage ſhould quit the buſy buſtling World

Ill ſuited to his gentle Meditations,
And in ſome Deſart find that Peace he loves.

GALESUS.

Miſtaken Man! Philoſophy conſiſts not
In airy Schemes, or idle Speculations:
The Rule and Conduct of all ſocial Life
Is her great Province. Not in lonely Cells
Obſcure ſhe lurks, but holds her heavenly Light
To Senates and to Kings, to guide their Councils,
And teach them to reform and bleſs Mankind.
All Policy but her's is falſe, and rotten;
All Valour not conducted by her Precepts
Is a deſtroying Fury ſent from Hell
To plague unhappy Man, and ruin Nations.

TULLUS.

To ſtop the Waſte of that deſtroying Fury,
Is the great Cauſe and Purpoſe of this War.
Art thou a Friend to Peace?—ſubdue the *Romans.*
Who, who, but they, have turn'd this antient Land,
Where, from *Saturnian* Times, harmonious Concord
Still lov'd to dwell, into a Scene of Blood,
Of endleſs Diſcord, and perpetual Rapine?
The Sword, the vengeful Sword, muſt drain away
This boiling Blood, that thus diſturbs the Nations!
Talk not of Terms. It is a vain Attempt
To bind th'Ambitious and Unjuſt by Treaties:
Theſe they elude a thouſand ſpecious Ways;
Or if they cannot find a fair Pretext,
They bluſh not in the Face of Heaven to break them.

GALESUS.

Why then affronted Heaven will combat for us.
Set Juſtice on our Side, and then my Voice
Shall be as loud for War as thine; my Sword
Shall ſtrike as deep; at leaſt my Blood ſhall flow
As freely, TULLUS, in my Country's Cauſe.
But as I then would die to ſerve the *Volſcians,*
So now I dare to ſerve them by oppoſing,
Even with my ſingle Voice, th' impetuous Torrent

That

That hurries us away beyond the Bounds
Of temperate Wiſdom; and preſume to tell thee,
It is thy Paſſion, not thy Prudence dictates
This haughty Language.

TULLUS.

Yes, it is my Paſſion,
A Paſſion for the Glory of my Country,
That ſcorns your narrow Views of timid Prudence.
Our injur'd Honour drew our Swords, and never
Shall they be ſheath'd while I command the *Volſcians*,
Till *Rome* ſubmits to *Antium*.—

GALESUS.

Rome will periſh
Ere ſhe ſubmit; and ſhe has ſtill her Walls,
The Strength of her Allies, her native Valour,
Which oft has ſav'd her in the worſt Extremes,
And, ſtronger yet than all, Deſpair, to aid her.

TULLUS.

All theſe will nought avail her, if our Fears
Come not to her Aſſiſtance—But, GALESUS,
Why urge you this to me? Go, talk to MARCIUS.
The War has given him all his Pride could hope for,
To ſee *Rome*'s Senate humbled at his Feet:
He now may wiſh to reign in Peace at *Antium*,
And thou, perhaps, art come an Envoy from him,
To learn if I ſhall prove a quiet Subject.

GALESUS.

Thro' this unguarded Opening of thy Soul,
I ſee what ſtings thee—Ah! beware of Envy!
If that pale Fury ſeize thee, thou art loſt!
TULLUS, 'tis eaſier far, from the clear Breaſt,
To keep out treacherous Vice, than to expel it.
Farewel. Remember I have done my Duty.

[*Goes out.*

TULLUS, *alone.*

This Man diſcerns my Heart—Well: What of that?
Am I afraid its Movements ſhould be ſeen?
I, whoſe clear Thoughts have never ſhunn'd the Light,

Muſt I now ſeek to hide them? O Misfortune!
To have reduc'd myſelf to ſuch a State,
So much beneath the Greatneſs of my Soul,
That, like a Coward, I muſt learn to practiſe
The wretched Arts of vile Diſſimulation!
By Heaven I will not do 't—I will not ſtoop
To veil my Diſcontent a Moment longer.
But ſee! my Rival comes, the happy MARCIUS.
His haughty Mien, his very Looks, affront me.

SCENE III.

CORIOLANUS, TULLUS.

CORIOLANUS.

TULLUS, I have receiv'd Intelligence,
That a ſtrong Body of the *Latin* Troops
Is in full March to raiſe the Siege of *Rome*.
Another Day will bring them to its Aid.
But go thou forth, and lead the valiant Bands,
By thee commanded, to repel theſe Succours.
Go, and cut off from *Rome* its laſt Reſource.

TULLUS.

I lead my Troops, from the great Scene of Action,
From falling *Rome*, which, ere To-morrow's Sun
Shall ſet, may be our Prey! Sure you forget
My Rank and Station—I diſdain the Service:
Give it to ſome you may command. For me,
I own no Maſter but the *Volſcian* States.
Rome is my Object. I from *Antium* brought
The nobleſt Army ever ſhook her Walls.
And ſhall I now, on that deciſive Day,
Doom'd by the Gods to lay her Pride in Aſhes,
Shall I be abſent from the glorious Work?
It is the higheſt Outrage even to think it.—
Juſt Gods! Doſt thou preſume to give thy Orders

To

To me? to me! thy Equal in Command?
Nay, thy Superior? Was it not my Hand,
My laviſh Hand, beſtow'd thy Power upon thee?
And know, proud *Roman*, that the Man who gave it,
Can at his Will reſume it.

CORIOLANUS.

I propos'd
This Expedition to thee as thy Friend,
Not as thy General, TULLUS. We are both
Commanders here; and for my Share of Pow'r,
Whene'er the Council of the *Volſcian* States,
Who cloath'd me with it, ſhall again demand it,
I at their Feet will lay it down, perſuaded,
The canker'd Tongue of Envy's Self muſt own,
That by my Service I have well deſerv'd it.

TULLUS

Was it to Them, or Me, you hither came
To crave Protection? Was not then your Fortune,
Your Liberty, your Life, at my Diſpoſal?
I rais'd you from the Duſt, a wretched Exile,
An Outcaſt, helpleſs, friendleſs, driven to beg
The loweſt Refuge which Deſpair can ſeek,
Shelter amidſt thy Foes. My pitying Goodneſs
Protected, truſted, and believ'd you grateful.
O ill-plac'd Confidence! What for all this
Is thy Return? Pride; Self-ſufficiency;
Councils apart from mine; deſpotic Orders;
The Glory of the War all pilfer'd from me:
And, to complete the Whole, a *Latin* Army
Now conjur'd up to draw me from the Siege;
Till by cajoling our tame Chiefs, and dazling
The ſenſeleſs Eyes of the low Mob of Soldiers,
Thou ſhalt be ſolely ſeated in the Power
Which, thank my Folly! now is ſhar'd betwixt us.

CORIOLANUS.

Immortal Gods! Hear I theſe Words from TULLUS!
I will be calm—I will.—Thou doſt accuſe me
Of the worſt Vice that can debaſe Mankind,

Of

Of black Ingratitude. On what Foundations?
What have I done to merit ſuch a Charge?
Is it my Fault, if in the *Volſcian* Army
My Name is as rever'd and great as thine?
Can I forbid Authority, and Fame,
To follow Merit and Succeſs?—You knew (known,
The Man whom you employ'd, and ſhould have
He would not be a Cypher in Employment.

TULLUS.

Think'ſt thou my Heart can better brook than thine
To be that Cypher! that diſhonour'd Tool!
Subſervient to th' Ambition of another?
Gods! I had rather live a drudging Peaſant,
Unknown to Glory, in ſome *Alpine* Village;
Than, at the Head of theſe victorious Legions,
Bear the high Name of Chief, without the Power.
No, MARCIUS, no. I will command indeed:
And thou ſhalt learn, with all the *Volſcian* Army,
To treat their General with Reſpect.

CORIOLANUS.

Reſpect!
O TULLUS! TULLUS! by the Powers divine!
I bore thee once Reſpect, as high as Man
Can ſhew to Man. From thee, my Foe, my Rival,
I nor diſdain'd nor fear'd to ask Protection.
You gave me all I ask'd, you gave me more,
With noble Warmth of Heart! which, to Eſteem,
Added the Ties of Gratitude, and Friendſhip.
Whatever ſince, in Council, or in Arms,
Has been by me atchiev'd, was done for thee.
My Glory all was thine. The Palms I gain'd
Only compos'd a Garland for his Brow,
Who rais'd this baniſh'd Man to tread on *Rome*.

TULLUS.

To tread on him who rais'd him—That, I know,
Is thy ambitious Purpoſe; but be certain,
However *Rome* may bend beneath thy Fortune,
Thou ſhalt not find an eaſy Conqueſt here.

CORIOLANUS.

May *Jove* with Lightning ſtrike me to the Centre!
If from the Day I ſaw thy Face at *Antium*,
My Heart has ever form'd one ſecret Thought
To hurt thy Honour, or depreſs thy Greatneſs:
I was thy Friend, thy Soldier, and thy Servant.
But now I will as openly avow,
Thy Jealouſy has, with envenom'd Breath,
Made ſuch a ſudden Ravage in our Friendſhip,
I know not what to think. ——

TULLUS.

Think me thy Foe.
There is no laſting Friendſhip with the Proud.

CORIOLANUS.

Nor with the Jealous —— But of this enough.
Come, let us turn our Fire a nobler Way:
We have a worthier Quarrel to purſue. ——
It were unjuſt, diſhonourable, baſe,
Our Pride ſhould hurt the *Volſcian* Cauſe.

TULLUS.

No, MARCIUS.
I mean to guard it better for the future:
The *Volſcian* Cauſe is ſafeſt with a *Volſcian*.
I therefore claim, inſiſt upon my Right;
That you ſhall yield me my Command in Turn.
The firſt Attack was yours: 'Tis ſcanty Juſtice,
The ſecond ſhould be mine.

CORIOLANUS.

TULLUS, 'tis yours.
O it imports not which of us command!
Give me the loweſt Rank among your Troops:
All *Italy* will know, the Voice of Fame
Will tell all future Times, that I was preſent;
That CORIOLANUS in the *Volſcian* Army
Aſſiſted, when Imperial *Rome* was ſack'd;
That City which, while he maintain'd her Cauſe,
Invincible herſelf, made *Antium* tremble.

TULLUS.

What arrogant Preſumption! TULLUS.

SCENE IV.

To them VOLUSIUS, *entering haſtily.*

TULLUS.

Ha! VOLUSIUS,
Thy Looks declare ſome Meſſage of Importance.

VOLUSIUS.

TULLUS, they do — I was to find thee, MARCIUS.
To thee a ſecond Deputation comes,
Thy Mother, and thy Wife, with a long Train
Of all the nobleſt Ladies *Rome* can boaſt,
In mourning Habits clad, approach our Camp,
Preceded by a Herald, to demand
Another Audience of Thee.

CORIOLANUS.

How, VOLUSIUS!
Said you, the *Roman* Ladies! Low, indeed,
Muſt be the State of *Rome*, when thus her Matrons
She ſends amidſt the Tumults of a Camp,
To beg Protection for the Men, who lie
Trembling behind their Ramparts — Come! once more!
And ſee me put an End to Prayers and Treaty!

SCENE V.

TULLUS. VOLUSIUS.

VOLUSIUS.

TULLUS, 'tis well. This anſwers to my Wiſhes.

TULLUS.

How? What is well? That humbled *Rome* once more
Shall deck him with the Trophies of our Arms?

Vo-

VOLUSIUS.

And hop'ſt thou nothing from this bleſt Event?
They who have often blaſted mighty Heroes,
Who oft have ſtoln into the firmeſt Hearts,
And melted them to Folly; They, my Friend,
Will do what Wiſdom never could effect.

TULLUS.

Think'ſt thou the Prayers and Tears of wailing Women
Can ſhake the Man, who with ſuch cold Diſdain
Stood firm againſt thoſe venerable Conſuls,
And ſpurn'd the Genius of his kneeling Country?

VOLUSIUS.

It was his Pride alone that made him ours.
That Paſſion kept him firm; the flattering Charm
Of humbling thoſe, who in their Perſons bore
The whole collected Majeſty of *Rome*.
Theſe Women are no proper Objects for it:
He cannot triumph o'er his Wife and Mother.
On this my Hopes are founded, that theſe Women
May by their gentler Influence ſubdue him.

TULLUS.

Whate'er th' Event, he ſhall no longer here,
As wave his Paſſions, dictate Peace, or War.
Whether his ſtubborn Soul maintains its Firmneſs,
Or yields to Female Prayers, the *Volſcian* Honour
Will be alike betray'd. If *Rome* prevails,
He ſtops our conquering Arms from her Deſtruction;
If he rejects her Suit, he reigns our Tyrant.
But, by th' Immortal Gods! his ſhort-liv'd Empire
Shall never ſee yon radiant Sun deſcend.

VOLUSIUS.

Bleſt be thoſe Gods that have at laſt inſpir'd thee
With Reſolution equal to thy Cauſe,
The Cauſe of Liberty! ——

TULLUS.

Be ſure, VOLUSIUS,
If that ſhould happen which thy Hopes portend;
Should he, by Nature tam'd, diſarm'd by Love,

Reſpite

Reſpite the *Roman* Doom —— He ſeals his own:
By Heaven! he dies.

VOLUSIUS.

Let me embrace thee, TULLUS!
Now breaking from the Cloud, which, like the Sun,
Thy own too bounteous Beams had drawn around thee.

TULLUS.

You was deceiv'd, my Friend. When I with Tameneſs,
With Tameneſs which aſtoniſh'd thy brave Spirit,
Seem'd to ſubmit to that unequal Sway
He arrogated o'er me; know, my Heart
Ne'er ſwell'd ſo high as in that cruel Moment.
My Indignation, like th' impriſon'd Fire
Pent in the troubled Breaſt of glowing *Ætna*,
Burnt deep and ſilent: But, collected now,
It ſhall beneath its Fury bury MARCIUS!
'Tis fixt. Our Tyrant dies.

VOLUSIUS.

TULLUS, my Sword
Here claims to be employ'd. — Nor mine alone —
There are ſome worthy *Volſci* ſtill remaining,
Who think with us, and pine beneath the Laurels
A *Roman* Chief beſtows.

TULLUS.

Go, find them ſtrait,
And bring them to the Space before his Tent;
'Tis there he will receive this Deputation.
Then if he ſinks beneath theſe Womens Prayers —
Or if he does not — But, VOLUSIUS, wait,
I give thee ſtricteſt Charge to wait my Signal.
Perhaps I may find Means to free the *Volſci*
Without his Blood. If not — We will be free.

The End of the Fourth ACT.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Trumpets ſounding.

The Scene diſcovers the Camp, a Croud of Volſcian *Officers with Files of Soldiers, drawn up as before. Enter* CORIOLANUS, TULLUS, GALESUS, VOLUSIUS. *The* Roman *Ladies advance ſlowly from the Depth of the Stage, with* VETURIA *the Mother of* CORIOLANUS, *and* VOLUMNIA *his Wife, at their Head, all clad in Habits of Mourning.* CORIOLANUS *ſtands at the Head of the* Volſci, *ſurrounded by his Lictors; but, when he perceives his Mother and Wife, after ſome Struggle, he advances, and goes haſtily to embrace them.*

CORIOLANUS *advancing.*

LOWER your Faſces, Lictors ——
Oh VETURIA!
Thou beſt of Parents!

VETURIA.

CORIOLANUS, ſtop.
Whom am I to embrace? A Son, or Foe?
Say, in what Light am I regarded here?
Thy Mother, or thy Captive?

CORIOLANUS.

CORIOLANUS.

Juſtly, Madam,
You check my Fondneſs, that, by Nature hurry'd,
Forgot I was the General of the *Volſci*,
And you a Deputy from hoſtile *Rome*.
[*He goes back to his former Station.*
I hear you with Reſpect. Speak your Commiſſion.

VETURIA.

Think not I come a Deputy from *Rome*.
Rome, once rejected, ſcorns a Second Suit.
You have already heard whate'er the Tongue
Of Eloquence can plead, whate'er the Wiſdom
Of ſacred Age, the Dignity of Senates,
And Virtue, can enforce. Behold me here,
Sent by the Shades of your immortal Fathers,
Sent by the Genius of the *Marcian* Line,
Commiſſion'd by my own maternal Heart,
To try the ſoft, yet ſtronger Powers of Nature.
Thus authoriz'd, I aſk, nay, claim a Peace,
On equal, fair, and honourable Terms,
To Thee, to *Rome*, and to the *Volſcian* People.
Grant it, my Son! Thy Mother begs it of thee,
Thy Wife, the beſt, the kindeſt of her Sex,
And theſe illuſtrious Matrons, who have ſooth'd
The gloomy Hours thou haſt been abſent from us.
We, by whate'er is great and good in Nature,
By every Duty, by the Gods, conjure Thee!
To grant us Peace, and turn on other Foes
Thy Arms, where thou may'ſt purchaſe virtuous Glory.

CORIOLANUS.

I ſhould, VETURIA, break thoſe holy Bonds
That hold the wide Republic of Mankind,
Society, together; I ſhould grow
A Wretch, unworthy to be call'd thy Son;
I ſhould, with my VOLUMNIA's fair Eſteem,
Forfeit her Love; theſe Matrons would deſpiſe me—
Could I betray the *Volſcian* Cauſe, thus truſted,

Thus

Thus recommended to me—No, my Mother,
You cannot ſure, you cannot aſk it of me!

VETURIA.

And does my Son ſo little know me?. me!
Who took ſuch Care to form his tender Years,
Left to my Conduct by his dying Father?
Have I ſo ill deſerv'd that Truſt? Alas!
Am I ſo low in thy Eſteem, that thou
Should'ſt e'er imagine I could urge a Part
Which in the leaſt might ſtain the *Marcian* Honour?
No, let me periſh rather! periſh All!
Life has no Charms compar'd to ſpotleſs Glory!
I only aſk, thou would'ſt forbid thy Troops
To waſte our Lands, and to aſſault yon City,
Till Time be given for mild and righteous Meaſures.
Grant us but One Year's Truce: Mean while thou may'ſt,
With Honour and Advantage to both Nations,
Betwixt us mediate a perpetual Peace.

CORIOLANUS.

Alas! my Mother! That were granting all.

VETURIA.

Canſt thou refuſe me ſuch a juſt Petition,
The Firſt Requeſt thy Mother ever made Thee?
Canſt thou to her Intreaties, Prayers, and Tears,
Prefer a ſavage obſtinate Revenge?
Have Love and Nature loſt all Power within thee?

CORIOLANUS.

No,— in my Heart they reign as ſtrong as ever.
Come, I conjure you, quit ungrateful *Rome*,
Come, and complete my Happineſs at *Antium*,
You, and my dear VOLUMNIA— There, VETURIA,
There ſhall you ſee with what Reſpect the *Volſci*
Will treat the Wife and Mother of their General.

VETURIA.

Treat me thyſelf with more Reſpect, my Son;
Nor dare to ſhock my Ears with ſuch Propoſals.
Shall I deſert my Country, I who come
To plead her Cauſe? Ah no!— A Grave in *Rome*

Would better pleaſe me, than a Throne at *Antium*.
How haſt thou thus forſaken all my Precepts?
How haſt thou thus forgot thy Love to *Rome?*
O CORIOLANUS, when with hoſtile Arms,
With Fire and Sword, you enter'd on our Borders,
Did not the foſtering Air, that breathes around us,
Allay thy guilty Fury, and inſtil
A certain native Sweetneſs thro' thy Soul?
Did not your Heart thus murmur to itſelf?
" Theſe Walls contain whatever can command
" Reſpect from Virtue, or is dear to Nature,
" The Monuments of Piety and Valour,
" The ſculptur'd Forms, the Trophies of my Fathers,
" My houſhold Gods, my Mother, Wife and Chil-
" dren!"

CORIOLANUS.

Ah! you ſeduce me with too tender Views!—
Theſe Walls contain the moſt corrupt of Men,
A baſe ſeditious Herd; who trample Order,
Diſtinction, Juſtice, Laws, beneath their Feet,
Inſolent Foes to Worth, the Foes of Virtue!

VETURIA.

Thou haſt not thence a Right to lift thy Hand
Againſt the whole Community, which forms
Thy ever-ſacred Country— That conſiſts
Not of coeval Citizens alone:
It knows no Bounds; it has a Retroſpect
To Ages paſt; it looks on thoſe to come;
And graſps of all the general Worth and Virtue.
Suppoſe, my Son, that I to thee had been
A harſh obdurate Parent, even unjuſt:
How would the monſtrous Thought with Horror
ſtrike thee,
Of plunging, from Revenge, thy raging Steel
Into her Breaſt, who nurs'd thy infant Years!—

CORIOLANUS.

Rome is no more! that *Rome* which nurs'd my Youth;
That *Rome*, conducted by *Patrician* Virtue,

She is no more! My Sword ſhall now chaſtiſe
Theſe Sons of Pride and Dirt! Her upſtart Tyrants!
Who have debas'd the nobleſt State on Earth
Into a ſordid Democratic Faction.
Why will my Mother join her Cauſe to theirs?

VETURIA.

Forbid it, *Jove!* that I ſhould e'er diſtinguiſh
My Intereſt from the general Cauſe of *Rome*;
Or live to ſee a foreign hoſtile Arm
Reform th'Abuſes of our Land of Freedom.
[*Pauſing.*
But 'tis in vain, I find, to reaſon more.
Is there no way to reach thy filial Heart,
Once fam'd as much for Piety as Courage?
Oft haſt thou juſtly triumph'd, CORIOLANUS;
Now yield one Triumph to thy widow'd Mother;
And ſend me back amidſt the loud Acclaims,
The grateful Tranſports of deliver'd *Rome*,
The happieſt far, the moſt renown'd of Women!

CORIOLANUS.

Why, why, VETURIA, wilt thou plead in vain?
[TULLUS. *Aſide to* VOLUSIUS.
See, ſee, VOLUSIUS, how the ſtrong Emotions
Of powerful Nature ſhake his inmoſt Soul!
See how they tear him.—If he long reſiſts them,
He is a God, or ſomething worſe than Man.

VETURIA.

O MARCIUS, MARCIUS! canſt thou treat me thus?
Canſt thou complain of *Rome*'s Ingratitude,
Yet be to me ſo cruelly ungrateful?
To me! who anxious rear'd thy Youth to Glory?
Whoſe only Joy, theſe many Years, has been,
To boaſt that CORIOLANUS was my Son?
And doſt thou then renounce me for thy Mother?
Spurn me before theſe Chiefs, before thoſe Soldiers,
That weep thy ſtubborn Cruelty? Art thou

The hardeſt Man to me in this Aſſembly?
Look at me! Speak!
[*Pauſing, during which he appears in great Agitation.*
Still doſt thou turn away?
Inexorable? Silent?——Then, behold me,
Behold thy Mother, at whoſe Feet thou oft
Haſt kneel'd with Fondneſs, kneeling now at thine,
Wetting thy ſtern Tribunal with her Tears.

CORIOLANUS. [*Raiſes her.*

VETURIA, riſe. I cannot ſee Thee thus.
It is a Sight uncomely, to behold
My Mother at my Feet, and that to urge
A Suit, relentleſs Honour muſt refuſe.

VOLUMNIA. [*Advancing.*

Since, CORIOLANUS, thou doſt ſtill retain,
In ſpite of all thy Mother now has pleaded,
Thy dreadful Purpoſe, Ah! how much in vain
Were it for me to join my Supplications!
The Voice of thy VOLUMNIA, once ſo pleaſing
How ſhall it hope to touch the Husband's Heart,
When proof againſt the Tears of ſuch a Parent?
I dare not urge what to thy Mother thou
So firmly haſt deny'd——But I muſt weep——
Muſt weep, if not thy harſh Severity,
At leaſt thy Situation. O permit me,
[*Taking his Hand.*
To ſhed my guſhing Tears upon thy Hand!
To preſs it with the cordial Lips of Love!
And take my laſt Farewel!

CORIOLANUS.

Yet, yet, my Soul,
Be firm, and perſevere——

VOLUMNIA.

Ah CORIOLANUS!
Is then this Hand, this Hand to me devoted,
The Pledge of Nuptial Love, that has ſo long

Pro-

Protected, bleſs'd, and ſhelter'd us with Kindneſs,
Now lifted up againſt us? Yet I love it,
And, with ſubmiſſive Veneration, bow
Beneath th' Affliction which it heaps upon us.
But O! what nobler Tranſports would it give thee!
What Joy beyond Expreſſion! couldſt thou once
Surmount the furious Storm of fierce Revenge,
And yield thee to the Charms of Love and Mercy.
Oh make the glorious Trial!

CORIOLANUS.

Mother! Wife!
Are all the Powers of Nature leagu'd againſt me?
I cannot!—will not!—Leave me, my VOLUMNIA!

VOLUMNIA.

Well, I obey—How bitter thus to part!
Upon ſuch Terms to part! perhaps for ever!—
But tell me, ere I hence unroot my Feet,
When to my lonely Home I ſhall return,
What from their Father, to our little Slaves,
Unconſcious of the Shame to which you doom them,
What ſhall I ſay?

[*Pauſing; He highly agitated.*

Nay—tell me, CORIOLANUS!

CORIOLANUS.

Tell thee! What ſhall I tell thee? See theſe Tears!
Theſe Tears will tell thee what exceeds the Power
Of Words to ſpeak, whate'er the Son, the Husband,
And Father, in one complicated Pang,
Can feel—But leave me;—even in Pity leave me!
Ceaſe, ceaſe, to torture me, my dear VOLUMNIA!
You only tear my Heart; but cannot ſhake it:
For by th' immortal Gods, the dread Avengers
Of broken Faith!——

VOLUMNIA. [*Kneeling.*

Oh ſwear not, CORIOLANUS!
Oh vow not our Deſtruction!

VETURIA.

Daughter, riſe.
Let us no more before the *Volſian* People
Expoſe ourſelves a Spectacle of Shame.
It is in vain we try to melt a Breaſt,
That, to the beſt Affections Nature gives us,
Prefers the worſt—Hear me, proud Man! I have
A Heart as ſtout as thine. I came not hither,
To be ſent back rejected, baffled, ſham'd,
Hateful to *Rome*, becauſe I am Thy Mother:
A *Roman* Matron knows, in ſuch Extremes,
What Part to take—And thus I came provided.
[*Drawing from under her Robe a Dagger.*
Go! barbarous Son! go! double Parricide!
Ruſh o'er my Corſe to thy belov'd Revenge!
Tread on the bleeding Breaſt of her, to whom
Thou ow'ſt thy Life!—Lo, thy firſt Victim!

CORIOLANUS. [*Seizing her Hand.*

Ha!
What doſt thou mean?

VETURIA.

To die, while *Rome* is free,
To ſeize the Moment ere thou art her Tyrant.

CORIOLANUS.

O uſe thy Power more juſtly! Set not thus
My treacherous Heart in Arms againſt my Reaſon.
Here! here! thy Dagger will be well employ'd;
Strike here! and reconcile my fighting Duties.

VETURIA.

Off!—Set me free!—Think'ſt thou that Graſp, which binds
My feeble Hand, can fetter too my Will?
No, my proud Son! Thou canſt not make me live,
If *Rome* muſt fall!—No Pow'r on Earth can do it!

CORIOLANUS.

Pity me, generous VOLSCI!—You are Men—
Muſt it then be?—Confuſion!—Do I yield?
What is it? Is it Weakneſs? Is it Virtue?—
Well!—

VE-

VETURIA.

What? Speak!

CORIOLANUS.

O, no!—my ſtifled Words refuſe
A Paſſage to the Throes that wring my Heart.

VETURIA.

Nay, if thou yieldeſt, yield like CORIOLANUS;
And what thou do'ſt, do nobly!

CORIOLANUS. [*Quitting her Hand.*

There!—'Tis done!—
Thine is the Triumph, Nature! [*To* VETURIA *in a low Tone of Voice.*
Ah VETURIA!
Rome by thy Aid is ſav'd—but thy Son loſt.

VETURIA.

He never can be loſt, who ſaves his Country.

CORIOLANUS. [*Turning to the* Roman *Ladies.*

Ye Matrons, Guardians of the *Roman* Safety,
You to the Senate may report this Anſwer.
We grant the Truce you ask. But on theſe Terms:
That *Rome*, mean-time, ſhall to a Peace agree,
Fair, equal, juſt, and ſuch as may ſecure
The Safety, Rights, and Honour of the VOLSCI.
[*To the Troops.*
VOLSCI, We raiſe the Siege. Go, and prepare,
By the firſt Dawn, for your Return to *Antium*.

[*As the Troops retire, and* CORIOLANUS *turns to the* Roman *Ladies*;

TULLUS. [*To* VOLUSIUS *aſide.*

'Tis as we wiſh'd, VOLUSIUS—To your Station.
But mark me well—Till thou ſhalt hear my Call,
I charge thee not to ſtir. One Offer more
My Honour bids me make to this proud Man,
Before we ſtrike the Blow——If he rejects it,
His Blood be on his Head.

VOLUSIUS.

Well! I obey you.

[*He goes out.*

CORIOLANUS.

Be it thy Care, *Galeſus*, that a Safeguard
Attend theſe noble Matrons back to *Rome*.

SCENE II.

CORIOLANUS. TULLUS.

CORIOLANUS.

I plainly, TULLUS, by your Looks diſcern
You diſapprove my Conduct.

TULLUS.

CAIUS MARCIUS,
I mean not to aſſail thee with the Clamour
Of loud Reproaches, and the War of Words;
But, Pride apart, and all that can pervert
The Light of ſteady Reaſon, here to make
A candid fair Propoſal

CORIOLANUS.

Speak. I hear thee.

TULLUS.

I heed not tell thee, that I have perform'd
My utmoſt Promiſe. Thou haſt been protected;
Haſt had thy ampleſt, moſt ambitious Wiſh:
Thy wounded Pride is heal'd, thy dear Revenge
Completely ſated; and, to crown thy Fortune,
At the ſame time, thy Peace with *Rome* reſtor'd.
Thou art no more a *Volſcian*, but a *Roman*.
Return, return; thy Duty calls upon thee,
Still to protect the City thou haſt ſav'd:
It ſtill may be in Danger from our Arms.

CORIOLANUS.

Inſolent Man! Is this thy fair Propoſal?

TULLUS.

Be patient — Hear! By hoſpitable *Jove!*
I mean thee well —— Yes, one laſt Bounty more

I frankly will beſtow. I have already
From *Rome* protected thee; now from the *Volſci*,
From their juſt Vengeance, I will ſtill protect Thee.
Retire. I will take care thou may'ſt with Safety.

CORIOLANUS.

With Safety! — Heav'ns! — And think'ſt thou

CORIOLANUS

Will ſtoop to thee for Safety? No! my Safeguard
Is in myſelf, a Boſom void of Blame,
And the Great Gods, Protectors of the Juſt. ——
O 'tis an Act of Cowardice and Baſeneſs,
To ſeize the very Time my Hands are fetter'd,
By the ſtrong Chain of former Obligations,
The ſafe ſure Moment to inſult me. —— Gods!
Were I now free, as on that Day I was,
When at *Corioli* I tam'd thy Pride,
This had not been.

TULLUS.

Thou ſpeak'ſt the Truth: It had not.
O for that Time again! Propitious Gods,
If you will bleſs me, grant it! — Know, for That,
For that dear Purpoſe, I have now propos'd
Thou ſhould'ſt return. I pray thee, *Marcius*, do it!
And we ſhall meet again on nobler Terms.

CORIOLANUS.

When to the *Volſci* I have clear'd my Faith,
Doubt not I ſhall find Means to meet thee nobly.
We then our generous Quarrel may decide
In the bright Front of ſome embattel'd Field,
And not in private Brawls, like fierce Barbarians.

TULLUS.

Thou canſt not hope Acquittal from the *Volſci*. —

CORIOLANUS.

I do: — Nay more, expect their Approbation,
Their Thanks! I will obtain them ſuch a Peace
As thou durſt never aſk; a perfect Union
Of their whole Nation with imperial *Rome*

In

In all her Privileges, all her Rights.
By the juſt Gods, I will! What would'ſt thou more?

TULLUS.

What would I more! Proud *Roman*; This I would;
Fire the curſt Foreſt where theſe *Roman* Wolves
Haunt and infeſt their nobler Neighbours round them;
Extirpate from the Boſom of this Land,
A falſe perfidious People, who, beneath
The Maſk of Freedom, are a Combination
Againſt the Liberty of Human-kind,
The genuine Seed of Outlaws and of Robbers.

CORIOLANUS.

The Seed of Gods! —— 'Tis not for thee, vain Boaſter!
'Tis not for ſuch as Thou, ſo often ſpar'd
By her victorious Sword, to talk of *Rome*,
But with Reſpect and awful Veneration.
Whate'er her Blots, whate'er her giddy Factions,
There is more Virtue in one ſingle Year
Of *Roman* Story, than your *Volſcian* Annals
Can boaſt thro' all your creeping dark Duration!

TULLUS.

I thank thy Rage. This full diſplays the Traitor.

CORIOLANUS.

Ha! Traitor!

TULLUS.

Firſt, to thy own Country, Traitor!
And Traitor, now, to mine!

CORIOLANUS.

Ye heavenly Powers!
I ſhall break looſe—My Rage — But let us part—
Leſt my raſh Hand ſhould do a haſty Deed
My cooler Thought forbids.

TULLUS.

For the laſt] time,
Hear me, and mark my Words; the ſober Dictates
Of

Of well-weigh'd Reſolution. Thou and I
Are in that State for which reſiſtleſs Nature
Has form'd us, Foes again — Begone — Return —
To head the *Roman* Troops. I grant thee Quittance
Full and complete of all thoſe Obligations
Thou haſt ſo oft inſultingly complain'd
Fetter'd thy Hands. They now are free. I court
The worſt thy Sword can do; whilſt thou from me
Haſt nothing to expect, but ſore Deſtruction.
Quit then this hoſtile Camp. Once more I tell thee,
Thou art not here one ſingle Hour in Safety.

CORIOLANUS.

Think'ſt thou to fright me hence?

TULLUS.

Thou wilt not then?
Thou wilt not take the Safety which I offer?

CORIOLANUS.

Till I have clear'd my Honour in your Council,
And prov'd before them all, to thy Confuſion,
The Falſhood of thy Charge; as ſoon in Battle
I would before thee fly, and howl for Mercy,
As quit the Station they have here aſſign'd me.

TULLUS.

Voluſius! Hoa!

SCENE III.

To them Voluſius, *and Conſpirators, with their Swords drawn.*

TULLUS.

Seize, and ſecure the Traitor!

CORIO-

CORIOLANUS.

[*Laying his Hand upon his Sword.*

Who dares approach me, dies!

VOLUSIUS.

Die thou!

[*As* Coriolanus *draws his Sword,* Voluſius *and the Conſpirators ruſh upon and ſtab him.* Tullus *ſtanding by without having drawn his Sword.*

CORIOLANUS.

[*Endeavouring to free himſelf.*

Off!—Villains!

[*Falling.*

Oh murdering Slaves! Aſſaſſinating Cowards!

[*Dies.*

SCENE IV.

[*Upon the Noiſe of the Tumult, enter haſtily to them* Galeſus, *the other Deputies of the* Volſcian *States, Officers Friends of* Coriolanus, *and* Titus *with a large Band of Soldiers.*

GALESUS.

[*As he enters.*

Are we a Nation rul'd by Laws, or Fury?
How! Whence this Tumult?— [*Pauſing.*
Gods! what do I ſee?
The noble MARCIUS ſlain!

TULLUS.

You ſee a Traitor
Puniſh'd

Puniſh'd as he deſerv'd, the *Roman* Yoke
That thrall'd us broken, and the *Volſci* free!

GALESUS.

Hear me, great *Jove!* Hear, all you injur'd Powers
Of Friendſhip, Hoſpitality, and Faith!
By that heroic Blood, which from the Ground
Reeking to you for Vengeance cries, I ſwear!
This impious Breach of your eternal Laws,
This daring Outrage on the *Volſcian* Honour,
Shall find in me a rigorous Avenger!
On the ſame Earth, polluted by their Crime,
I will not live with theſe unpuniſh'd Ruffians!

TULLUS.

This Deed is mine: I claim it all!—Theſe Men,
Theſe valiant Men, were but my Inſtruments,
To puniſh him who to our Face betray'd us.
We ſhall not fear to anſwer to the *Volſci*,
In a full Council of their States at *Antium*,
The glorious Charge of having ſtabb'd their Tyrant!

GALESUS.

TITUS, till then ſecure them.

[Tullus *and Conſpirators are led off.*

[Galeſus, *ſtanding over the Body of* Coriolanus, *after a ſhort Pauſe, proceeds.*

Volſcian Fathers,
And ye, brave Soldiers, ſee an awful Scene,
Demanding ſerious ſolemn Meditation.
This Man was once the Glory of his Age,
Diſintereſted, juſt, with every Virtue
Of civil Life adorn'd, in Arms unequall'd.
His only Blot was this; That, much provok'd,
He rais'd his vengeful Arm againſt his Country.
And, lo! the righteous Gods have now chaſtis'd him,
Even by the Hands of thoſe for whom he fought.

Whatever private Views and Paſſions plead,
No Cauſe can juſtify ſo black a Deed:
Theſe, when the angry Tempeſt clouds the Soul,
May darken Reaſon, and her Courſe controul;
But when the Proſpect clears, her ſtartled Eye
Muſt from the treacherous Gulph with Horror fly,
On whoſe wild Wave, by ſtormy Paſſions toſt,
So many hapleſs Wretches have been loſt.
Then be this Truth the Star by which we ſteer;
Above Ourſelves *our* COUNTRY *ſhould be dear.*

The END.

EPILOGUE.

SPOKEN BY

Mrs. *WOFFINGTON.*

WELL! Gentlemen! and are you ſtill ſo vain
To treat our Sex with arrogant Diſdain,
And think, to you alone by partial Heav'n
Superior Senſe and ſovereign Pow'r are given,
When in the Story told To-night, you find,
With what a boundleſs Sway we rule the Mind,
And, by a few ſoft Words of ours, with Eaſe,
Can turn the proudeſt Hearts juſt where we pleaſe?
If an old Mother had ſuch pow'rful Charms,—
To ſtop a ſtubborn Roman's *conquering Arms,—*
Soldiers and Stateſmen of theſe Days, with you
What think you wou'd a fair young Miſtreſs do?
If with my grave Diſcourſe, and wrinkled Face,
I thus could bring a Hero to Diſgrace,
How abſolutely may I hope to reign
Now I am turn'd to my own Shape again!
However, I will uſe my Empire well;
And, if I have a certain magic Spell

Or

EPILOGUE.

Or in my Tongue, or Wit, or Shape, or Eyes,
Which can ſubdue the Strong, and fool the Wiſe,
Be not alarm'd: I will not interfere
In State-Affairs, nor undertake to ſteer
The Helm of Government, — as we are told
Thoſe Female Politicians did of old:
Such dangerous Heights I never wiſh'd to climb —
Thank Heav'n! I better can employ my Time —
Aſk you to what my Pow'r I ſhall apply?
To make my Subjects bleſt, is my Reply.
My Purpoſes are gracious all, and kind,
Some may be told — and ſome may be divin'd:
One, which at preſent I have moſt at Heart,
To you without Reſerve I will impart:
It is my Sovereign Will, — Hear, and obey, —
That you with Candour treat this Orphan Play.